BAT MAN
THE LINE OF
DC
SUPER-STARS
A FULL LENGTH
SHOCKER...
"MURDER
MASQUERADE"
25¢
NO. 268
OCT.
30430
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
BAT MAN
ON YOUR KNEES, BATMAN!
BOW TO THE MAN
YOU CAN NEVER DEFEAT--
THE SHEIKH!

BATMAN
GUEST-STARRING
ROBIN
THE TEEN WONDER
DID THE SHEIKH BLOW INTO GOTHAM FROM THE DESERT--OR FROM SOMEWHERE MORE SINISTER?
WHY DOES THIS BIZARRE KILLER SUDDENLY UNLEASH ON THE CITY A REIGN OF DEATH?
MOST PUZZLING OF ALL, THERE APPARENTLY IS NO REASON FOR THE BRUTAL CRIMES--YET THE BATMAN MUST UNCOVER A MOTIVE BEFORE HE CAN CONFRONT THE ASSASSIN IN A FINAL--AND MOST UNUSUAL BATTLE!
ACTION and INTRIGUE IN THE CLASSIC BATMAN TRADITION BY:
DENNY O'NEIL—Writer
IRV NOVICK—Penciller
TEX BLAISDELL—Inker
JULIUS SCHWARTZ—Editor
MURDER MASQUERADE!

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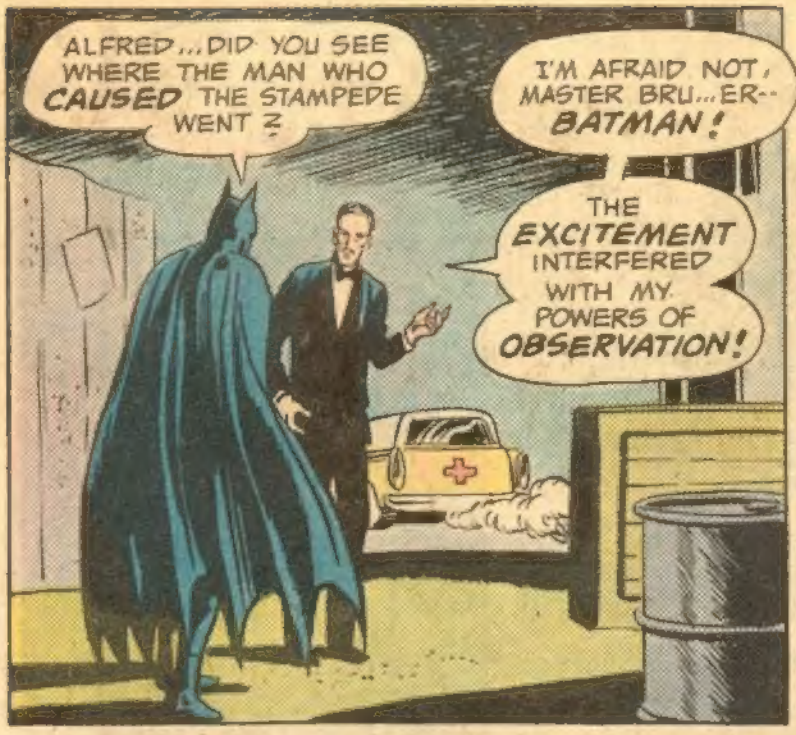
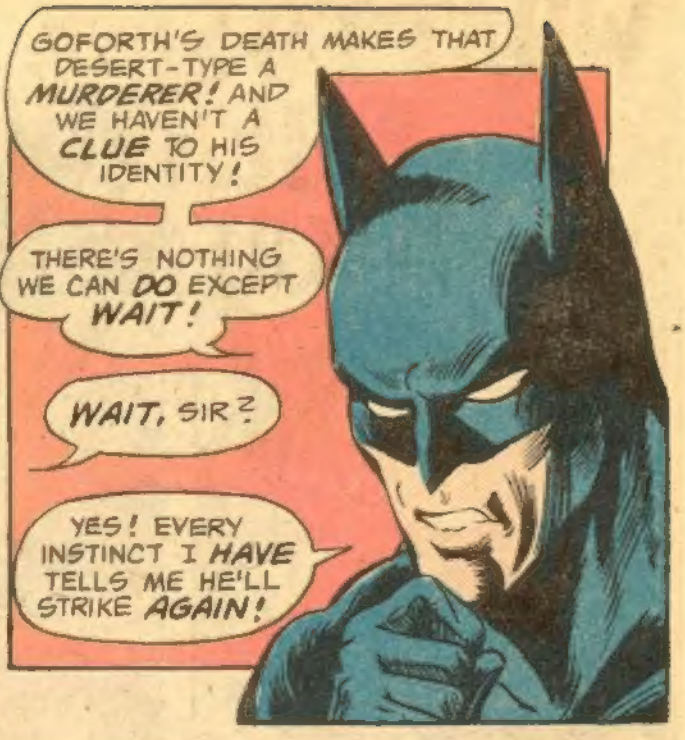
TWILIGHT AT GOTHAM PIER... MILLIONAIRE SOCIALITE BRUCE WAYNE AND HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT ALFRED ARE WATCHING...
CAMELS, MASTER BRUCE?
RIGHT, ALFRED! THE WAYNE FOUNDATION PURCHASED THEM!
WE'RE DONATING THE ANIMALS TO VARIOUS ZOOS--
MASTER BRUCE...LOOK! A CHAP IN A BURNOOSE... A DESERT COSTUME... CARRYING A RIFLE!
HE'S STAMPEDING THE CAMELS!
BLAM! BAM! BAM!
HOWEVER, ALFRED'S EMPLOYER IS ALREADY GONE--
--AND IN HIS PLACE... THE BATMAN!
ANYBODY WHO GETS IN THE WAY OF THOSE GALLOPING BEASTS WILL BE MANGLED!
BUT...HOW IN BLAZES DO YOU STOP A CAMEL-STAMPEDE?

THIS ISN'T EXACTLY AN EVERYDAY PROBLEM!
GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO... WING IT!
SOMETIMES RAMPAGING CATTLE CAN BE HALTED WHEN THE LEADER IS TURNED!
I HAVEN'T ANY BETTER IDEAS, SO...
WHOA, YOU LONG-LEGGED MANIAC!
NICE GOIN', BATMAN! YOU STOPPED THE STAMPEDE COLD!
ALL IN A NIGHT'S WORK!
YOU SAVED THE LIVES OF US STEVEDORES, BATMAN!
TOO BAD YOU WEREN'T QUICK ENOUGH TO SAVE HIS!
I RECOGNIZE THE POOR DEVIL... FREDRICK GOFORTH-- THE OIL BARON!
ALL HIS MONEY DIDN'T SAVE HIM FROM BEING TRAMPLED!
'SCUSE US! WE GOTTA GET HIM TO THE HOSPITAL-- MAKE HIS DEATH OFFICIAL!
3


ALFRED... DID YOU SEE WHERE THE MAN WHO CAUSED THE STAMPEDE WENT?
I'M AFRAID NOT, MASTER BRU...ER-- BATMAN!
THE EXCITEMENT INTERFERED WITH MY POWERS OF OBSERVATION!


GOFORTH'S DEATH MAKES THAT DESERT-TYPE A MURDERER! AND WE HAVEN'T A CLUE TO HIS IDENTITY!
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO EXCEPT WAIT!
WAIT, SIR?
YES! EVERY INSTINCT I HAVE TELLS ME HE'LL STRIKE AGAIN!

A HASTY CHANGE OF CLOTHING, A SHORT TAXI RIDE, AND...
ODD, SIR, WE SHOULD BE MEETING MASTER DICK AT THE GOTHAM SPORTS ARENA!
THE HUDSON UNIVERSITY HOCKEY TEAM IS PLAYING HERE TONIGHT--

--AND DICK IS COVERING THE GAME FOR THE SCHOOL NEWSPAPER!
OH, ALFRED...KEEP MUM ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PIER! DICK WOULD WANT TO GET INVOLVED!
...AND HIS CLASSES ARE MORE IMPORTANT, EH, WHAT?
SECTION 4

SHORTLY...
YOU'RE LOOKING FINE, DICK!
YOU AREN'T EXACTLY A CANDIDATE FOR THE OLD FOLKS' HOME YOURSELF, BRUCE! AND NEITHER IS ALFRED!
I TRY TO MAINTAIN MY TRIM, MASTER DICK!

THE FACE-OFF...AND THE GAME BEGINS...TO THE ROAR OF 30,000 FANS--
HUDSON
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

--WHILE ON A CATWALK HIGH OVER THE ICE...
SUDDENLY--
BLAM!
THAT CHAP HAS BEEN SHOT!
SEE TO HIM, DICK! GIVE HIM FIRST AID--
--I'M GOING AFTER THE GUNMAN!
SEC 1
THE VICTIM IS OLIVER HOPKINS... A DEDICATED HOCKEY BUFF--
--AND ONE OF THE LATE FREDRICK GOFORTH'S PARTNERS!
IF THAT'S A COINCIDENCE, I'M HENRY KISSINGER!
THE BULLET CAME FROM THIS CATWALK--
--THERE'S MY QUARRY... HEADING FOR THE ROOF!

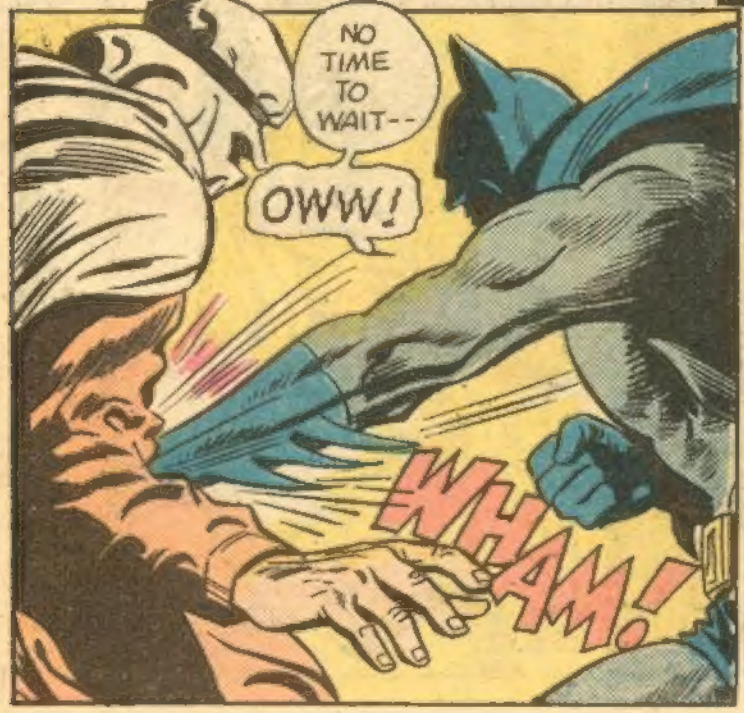
HE OBVIOUSLY HOPES TO REACH THE FIRE-ESCAPE-- CLIMB DOWN TO THE ALLEY BELOW!
HOLD IT!

NO? THEN I'LL TREAT YOU AS YOU DESERVE TO BE TREATED...
...LIKE A CRAZED ANIMAL!

WITH ASTONISHING SPEED, THE BATMAN'S FOE WHIPS OUT A KRIS AND SHRILLS --
NO ANIMAL, BATMAN! CALL ME... THE SHEIKH!
I'D RATHER CALL YOU A CANDIDATE FOR A CELL!

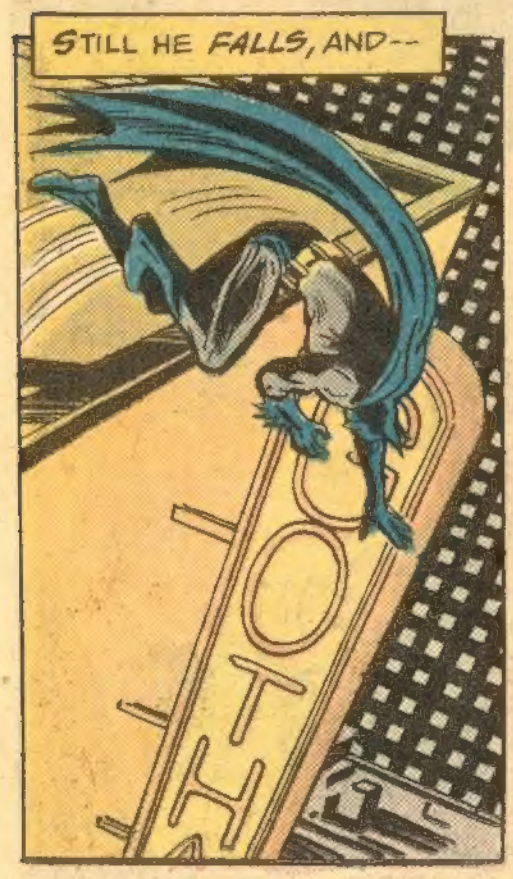
A CELL? FOR ME? A NATIVE OF THE DESERT... THE LIMITLESS WASTE?
YOU TALK FANCY! I WONDER--
I ACKNOWLEDGE NO HORIZON, MUCH LESS WALLS!

--HOW FANCY DO YOU FIGHT?
WAIT! YOU SHALL SEE--


NO TIME TO WAIT--
OWW!
WHAM!

HURT YOURSELF, BATMAN?
DID I! HE MUST BE WEARING ARMOR BENEATH THOSE ROBES!

INSTINCT, HONED BY YEARS OF TRAINING! THE BATMAN ABSORBS PART OF THE BLOW'S FORCE ON HIS FOREARMS!



--DOWN... DOWN--AND THE AIR IS FILLED WITH BREAKING GLASS AND THE CRACKLE OF ELECTRICITY--!

'JA SEE THAT?
YEAH-- THE BATMAN SLOWED HIMSELF WITH THE LETTERS--
--TILL HE COULD GRAB THAT RAILING!
BETTER CALL HIM AN AMBULANCE!
HIM AN AMBULANCE--!? THE ONE FOR THE SHOT GUY AIN'T ARRIVED YET!
YOU ALL RIGHT, BATMAN?
SLIGHTLY THE WORSE FOR WEAR...AND FURIOUS--
--I WAS SUCKERED--TWICE! I HAD THE KILLER-- THE SHEIKH--
--AND I LET HIM ESCAPE!
SOUNDS LIKE YOU COULD USE A LITTLE HELP FROM ROBIN!
NO WAY, DICK! IT'S MY PERSONAL PROBLEM AND...
PARDON ME, SIR... I AGREE WITH YOUNG RICHARD!
OKAY...O-KAY! ROBIN CAN CHECK THE POLICE MORGUE!
COULD BE THE DEAD MEN'S POSSESSIONS WILL GIVE US A CLUE!
AS FOR ME, I HAVE ANOTHER FISH TO FRY!
IT WILL WAIT UNTIL I TEND TO YOUR INJURIES!
BATMAN, SIR-- I INSIST!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

SOON, IN THE WAYNE PENTHOUSE--
NASTY CUTS, SIR!
THEY DO SMART, ALFRED! IF YOU'VE GOT TO BANDAGE THEM STIFFLY, WRAP THEM IN FIST FORM!
SURGICLE COTTON
I HAVE A HUNCH I'M NOT DONE PUNCHING TONIGHT!
HAVE YOU REACHED ANY CONCLUSIONS REGARDING TODAY'S VIOLENCE?
NOT REALLY! A COUPLE OF THINGS ARE OBVIOUS THOUGH!
GOFORTH AND HOPKINS ARE PARTNERS... IN THE OIL-IMPORTING BUSINESS!
AND THE SHEIKH APPARENTLY COMES FROM AN ARABIAN NATION... ONE OF THE BIG OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES!

THEREFORE, THE REASON FOR THE MURDERS PROBABLY LIES IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS!
THEY HAVE A THIRD PARTNER... LEO LUNT-- WHO'S ABOUT TO RECEIVE A VISIT... FROM THE BATMAN!

MEANWHILE... AT THE MORGUE--
RUN IT BY ME AGAIN! YOU SAY NEITHER GOFORTH NOR HOPKINS ARRIVED HERE?
YOU SAID IT, ROBIN!
I GOT A IDEA FOR YA--
--WHYN'T YA ASK THE AMBULANCE DRIVER! HE'S DOWN IN THE GARAGE!

A FAINT SCRAPE OF A SHOE-SOLE ALERTS THE TEEN WONDER...

THE OLD MONKEY WRENCH ATTACK--
--THE BATMAN TAUGHT ME HOW TO HANDLE THIS PLOY--
--WHEN I WAS IN FOURTH GRADE!
I REALIZE MY REPUTATION DEMANDS I SAY SOMETHING LIKE: "HOPE YOU DIDN'T WRENCH YOUR ARM"--
--BUT I'M NOT IN A PUNNING MOOD!
THE BATMAN WOULD SIMPLY SCARE THIS BADDIE INTO TALKING!
I'M NOT QUITE UP TO THAT YET!
DON'T BOTHER CONFESSING, CHUM! WE KNOW YOUR STORY!
LOOK ... I DIDN'T DO NOTHING... NOTHING MUCH!
JUST DROPPED THE BODIES OFF LIKE I WAS PAID TO!

SURE, SURE... A GUY IN FUNNY ROBES BRIBED YOU TO DELIVER GOFORTH AND HOPKINS TO THE PETROLEUM BUILDING!
NO--NOT THERE... THE CORNER OF 33RD AND PERU AVENUE!
A WORD OF ADVICE!
SINCE YOU CAN'T RECOGNIZE A BLUFF, DON'T PLAY POKER IN THE JAIL YOU'RE BOUND FOR!
HMMM... "BOUND FOR!" GUESS I AM IN A PUNNING MOOD!
AS ROBIN HASTENS TO PHONE COMMISSIONER GORDON, HIS MENTOR IS AT THE LUNT MANSION ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF GOTHAM...
ANYTHING YOU CAN RECALL MAY BE USEFUL, MR. LUNT!
BUT, MY DEAR BATMAN... NO ARAB HAS ANY REASON TO HARM ME OR MY LATE PARTNERS!
AHHH... EXCELLENT BRANDY! CARE FOR A SNIFTER, BATMAN?
I DON'T DRINK! PLEASE... STICK TO THE POINT--
--YOU WERE SPEAKING OF YOUR BUSINESS DEALINGS!
INDEED! IN RECENT MONTHS, WE'VE HAD DISAGREEMENTS CONCERNING OUR REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS!
BUT THE OIL IMPORTS--NO! OUR ARABIAN ASSOCIATES CHERISH US!
WE PAY TOP DOLLAR AND... MMMF!
QUIET! I HEARD A DOOR OPENING--!

POW!
STAY PUT, LUNT! DON'T MOVE AN INCH FROM COVER!
I DON'T DARE TACKLE HIM.. NOT WITH MY FINGERS LIKE HAMBURGER!
USUALLY I USE A FLYING KICK AGAINST AN OPPONENT COMING TOWARD ME--
--BUT I'M NOT IN MY USUAL CONDITION!

SURPRISED I SURVIVED THE FALL?
FALL? YOU BLABBER NONSENSE! NO MATTER--
--YOU WON'T SURVIVE A CRUSHED SKULL!
DON'T BET YOUR LAST OIL WELL ON THAT, SHEIKH!
DOOR'S BEING SLAMMED SHUT... LOCKED!
CLICK!
SLAM
AND WITH THESE BANDAGES ON MY HANDS... I CAN'T WRENCH IT OPEN!
HE'S BEATEN ME AGAIN!
A GUN-SHOT... COMING FROM THE LIBRARY--
--WHERE I LEFT LUNT!
BETTER GET THERE-- QUICK!
BAM!

TOO LATE-- HE'S DEAD--!
SHOT WITH AN ARABIAN MUSKET!
THE BULLET CAME THROUGH THIS WINDOW--!
THE SHEIKH... AND HE'S GOT A BIG HEAD START!
NO WAY I COULD CATCH HIM NOW!
THIS IS BEGINNING TO MAKE SENSE... BUT PART OF THE PUZZLE IS MISSING!
I'M BETTING I'LL FIND IT AMONG LUNT'S PAPERS!
WHAT HAS THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE DEDUCED? --WHAT'S HE SEEKING?
RING!
THE PHONE! ROBIN, I BET!
I ASKED HIM TO CONTACT ME HERE IF HE LEARNED ANYTHING!
REAL ESTATE - SPORTS
QUICKLY, CONCISELY, THE TEEN WONDER RELATES THE EVENTS OF THE PAST HOUR, AND...
THE STUFF I FOUND OUT DO YOU ANY GOOD?
YEAH... JUST FINE, PARTNER!
WITH WHAT I'VE FOUND, IT GIVES ME THE WHOLE BAG!
MEET ME AT 33RD AND PERU IN AN HOUR! WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO NAB US A SHEIKH!
ELSEWHERE, SOON AFTER...
HOW RIGHT YOU WERE, MY FRIEND! HA, HA, HA! IT IS FUN!

I HAVEN'T DONE THIS SINCE I WAS A KID!
I'D FORGOTTEN HOW EXHILARATING SKATING IS!
NOT AS EXHILERATING AS PUTTIN' EGG ON THE BATMAN'S FACE, THOUGH-- HUH, BOSS?
YES, YES... I ALMOST FEEL SORRY FOR THE BATMAN! TWICE HE'S BEEN HUMILIATED IN COMBAT!
AND AS FOR HIS MUCH-PRAISED DETECTIVE ABILITY... HE'S PROBABLY HEADING FOR THE MIDDLE EAST--
--TO SEARCH FOR US THERE! AFTER ALL, HE WOULDN'T EXPECT TO FIND A DESERT DWELLER ON ICE!
DON'T YOU AGREE, MY FRIEND?
INDEED I DO!
WELL, I DON'T!
THE BATMAN--
--AND ROBIN!
LIVE... IN PERSON-- AND NOT IN A DESERT SOMEWHERE!
WONDERING WHERE YOUR MISTAKES WERE? A LOT OF THEM... FIRST, THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GOFORTH'S CORPSE!
THAT LED ME TO ASK WHETHER HE REALLY DIED!
ANSWER--HE DIDN'T!
BODY ARMOR PROTECTED HIM FROM THE CAMELS' HOOFS...
...YES! THE SAME BODY ARMOR THAT SAVED ME FROM YOUR FISTS!

CHECK, GOFORTH... YOUR "DEATH" WAS MERELY A RED HERRING--
--DESIGNED TO DISTRACT THE AUTHORITIES FROM LUNT'S MURDER!
GET THEM!
GOFORTH PLANNED TO CHEAT HIS PARTNER--
--OF THEIR MUTUAL HOLDINGS--
--INCLUDING THIS SPORTS ARENA!
EXACTLY! MONTHS AGO, HE ESTABLISHED DUMMY CORPORATIONS TO GRAB LUNT'S SHARES IN THE COMPANY!
OH, BY THE WAY, ROBIN... THAT'S AN ILLEGAL USE OF THE STICK!
SURE... BUT THE REF ISN'T HERE!
YOU HAVEN'T EXPLAINED THE HOPKINS SHOOTING, BATMAN!
SAME DEAL AS WITH LUNT?
NOT AT ALL!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING.

ROBIN-- I'M SURPRISED AT YOU! THAT'S AN ILLEGAL CHECK... ANOTHER FOUL!
I HAVE A HUNCH THIS GUY IS PRETTY FOUL HIMSELF!
NO EXCUSES! INTO THE PENALTY BOX WITH YOU!
I'LL FINISH THE GAME ALONE!
PENALTY BOX
ROBIN IS CURIOUS ABOUT THE HOPKINS SHOOTING!
HE WAS SHOT, WASN'T HE, GOFORTH? SHOT... BUT NOT KILLED!
BODY ARMOR IS ALSO USEFUL AGAINST A BULLET!
YOU'VE GUESSED--?!
IT WASN'T HARD, HOPKINS! YOUR "BODY" DISAPPEARED, TOO... AND ROBIN DISCOVERED IT WAS DELIVERED TO A CORNER HALF A BLOCK FROM THIS VERY ARENA!
THE CLINCHER WAS THE LUNT SLAYING!
I LEFT THE SHEIKH AT THE FRONT OF THE MANSION...
HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY HAVE GOTTEN TO THE LIBRARY WINDOW IN TIME TO GUN LUNT--
WHACK!
--UNLESS THERE WERE TWO OF YOU!

THEREFORE, YOU SCHEMED TOGETHER TO KILL LUNT! TWO BOGUS MURDERS... A DOUBLE RED HERRING!
NO! COUNTING THE SHEIKH MASQUERADE, A TRIPLE RED HERRING!

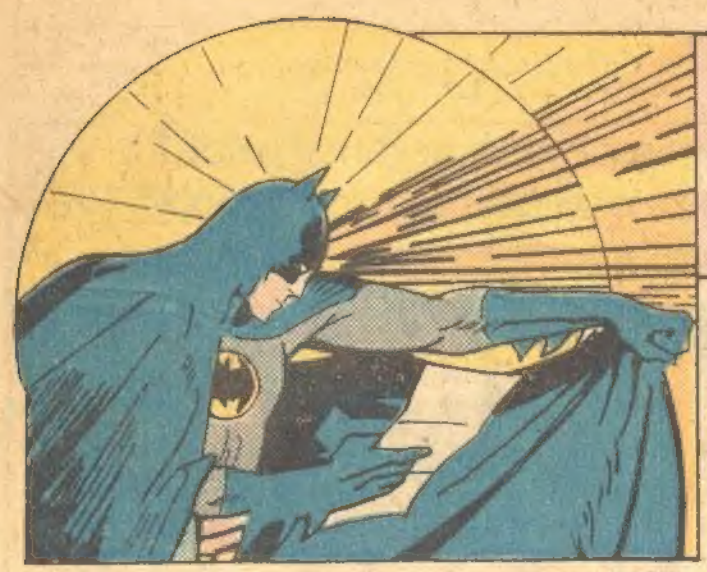
FOR AMATEURS, YOU'VE BEEN DIABOLICALLY CLEVER! SELDOM HAVE ANY CRIMINALS CAUSED ME SUCH GRIEF!
YOU'VE DECEIVED ME... HUMILIATED ME--!

THE TROUBLE IS... I TEND NOT TO STAY DECEIVED AND HUMILIATED!
MEN LIKE YOU ARE DRIVEN BY GREED! I HAVE A STRONGER MOTIVATION!

I HATE CRIME... HATE IT WITH EVERY FIBRE OF MY BEING!
EVEN IN A WORLD AS CONFUSED AND UNCERTAIN AS OURS, JUSTICE STILL EXISTS--

--AND WHETHER THROUGH ME OR THROUGH THE MACHINERY OF CIVILIZATION... THE LAW--
--JUSTICE TRIUMPHS!

GOAL, BATMAN!
LET'S GO HOME, ROBIN!
the end



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LETTERS to the BATMAN

c/o NATIONAL PERIODICAL PUBLICATIONS, INC.,
75 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019.

Dear Julie,

Let's see, we have an Evel . . . er, evil motorcycle daredevil named Devil Dayre who is going to make several million dollars by jumping a river canyon in a jet-cycle! Now where have I heard **that** before?

But Denny O'Neil turned out a hamburger-like story with "Death of a Daredevil" in **BATMAN #264**. In other words, it was a **whopper!** Though I didn't expect much after seeing the cover, I was pleasantly surprised.

I couldn't figure out why **Batman** would shed his cowl when we know he isn't dead! I now see that he had an excellent reason. I had the bodyguard pegged in an instant, but not till the end did I realize who the true mastermind was. Denny really showed **The Batman's** true colors as a detective this time.

Ernie Chua's art is much like Irv Novick's but Ernie seems to make everything a little smoother and less detailed. I like it!

SCOTT R. TAYLOR, Portland, Tex.

(You may think "Death of a Daredevil" was like that hamburger, but our next correspondent wishes we would "hold the lettuce", etc.—BR)

. . . . .

Dear Julie

What is going on in the hallowed halls of **DC**? What are you doing to **The Batman** that all crooks knew and feared as a creature from the deep, dark void? He's turning back into the campy, corny, dull **Batman** of yesteryear!

First we have a carbon of Evel Knievel with the worst kind of campy name ever! "Devil Dayre" sounds like something out of the **Batman** TV show!

And I thought the days when **Batman** was a perfect expert at anything and everything were behind us! But here he's a motorcyclist capable of beating a professional daredevil in a race—a race in which the opponent has a head start! Come on!

Then we have the return of the totally ridiculous whirly-bat. That really got my goat! Before we know it, we'll be back with **The Batman** who has every type of device conceivable to the human mind!

Finally, the worst cut of all was the closing scene of **Batman** ripping down the Devil Dayre poster—a scene of what seemed to be remorse in a stupid story. It didn't fit a single bit!

Denny, you've made **Batman** the best **DC** hero around, but if you turn out another story like this one, I'll begin to lose faith!

MICKEY McCONNELL, Richmond, Va.

(From your comments, Mickey, it looks like you've already done so!—BR)

. . . . .

Dear Editor:

Ernie Chua's **BATMAN** covers are great and **#264** was no exception! It was thrilling and whetted my appetite for the story.

"Death of a Daredevil" was thrilling, adventurous and very original, as always. Who else but Denny O'Neil could have thought up such a plot? **Bravo!**

Ernie's interior art should go on a parade float. It is vivid and has a great three-dimensional effect. Ditto for Dick Giordano's inking in bringing out the best.

Someone reading **#264** as his first **Batman** comic would think the Caped Crusader a clever, cunning and relentless man. The battle with the thugs, the beer-can scene and the last panel were all great—perfect examples of **The Batman** in action!

One final note: Where is **Robin**? Isn't his "nest" in the **Batcave**? Bring him back!

TOM WARD, New York, N.Y.

(Our Teen Wonder has moved his nest to our newest Bat-magazine, BATMAN FAMILY, which he shares with Bat-Girl! If you're lucky, you may still find a copy of #1!—BR)

. . . . .

Dear Julie & Company,

BATMAN #264: The art was adequate, considering it was only Ernie Chua's second try and of course Dick Giordano's inks saved what needed saving.

But the story more than made up for it, except for one gripe. In the beer-can scene, **Batman** is portrayed as he should be—agile, difficult to hit, cold and powerful. His reflexes have saved him a thousand times, so how can he be so easily felled by a thug with a pool cue? How can **Batman** stand, hands on hips, while a baddie is right behind him, weapon upraised? Don't explain it away as a plot clue, even though it is, because it's a cheap one at best.

I liked seeing Alfred in on the action and I also enjoyed seeing **Batman** using the whirly-bat. The issue overall was great, but then that's because **Batman** is, too!

STEPHEN PERRY, Johnson, Vt.

(Just enough space to let you know what's coming up for you Bat-fans! We've already plugged our new 50¢ Giant BATMAN FAMILY above and you've heard about THE JOKER—#4, by the way, features Green Arrow and will be on sale in early August—but do you know about our newest Batman spinoff? Winging your way in September: MAN-BAT by Gerry Conway, Steve Ditko and Allen Milgrom. Watch for it!—Bob Rozakis)